

Finally, we hit the floor with tin plates and some policemen came up and asked us why we did like that. We answered them that there was no water to drink or to use in the toilets. They gave us a response of broken pump and beatings. After that, they sent eight gallons of water for 318 detainees in our cell. No water was left for the rest after nearly 60 people drank it. At about 5:00 p.m., we had have a meal for lunch, but no water again. When we were curious about water from senior refugees, they said, "If we want water, we have to pay them (policemen) some money."

After breakfast in the next morning, water was scarce as before. There were eight sick detainees in that morning in our cell. Finally, we collected money amongst us, totally 500 baht, then we dealt with a policeman for water with that money. During our dinner, water coming up to our room for a while, then it was stopped. On the next day, as there was no water as usual, we hit the floor with tin plates again and some policemen came up and ordered us to line up and then some 20 detainees were beaten. But, we requested water from the police, and in that evening there was some drops of water and run out of again. If new detainees were about to be put into our cell, we were ordered to get up and line up at least 2-3 times even night.

The next morning, a female representative from UNHCR named Ms. Khun Wadani came and asked us whether there were Burmese students or not. When we heard that we were really happy. She asked our names and our NI numbers given by UNHCR when we applied for the refugee status at the UNHCR office in Bangkok. We told her about some students who want to have interviews with UNHCR in the IDC, if possible. She said she couldn't. She told us one thing that those students who passed the UNHCR interviews should enter Safe Area in Ratchaburi. She used to come to IDC for some time, but she did not help us anything. As more and more people got sick in the cells day by day, a doctor named Dr Khaziya came to IDC. But she emphasised only those who were severe enough or who were dying.

When there is time for the detainees to be sent back to the IDCs in border towns like Mae Sot and Sangkhalaburi, every refugee need to pay the police for his/her transportation charge. For example, it costs 500 bahts per person if transported to Mae Sot. Those who cannot afford have to spend more time in Bangkok IDC. When 100 detainees were sent to Mae Sot or Sangkhalaburi, their former room was filled with more than 100 new arrivals again.

During my ten days in the cell in IDC, I suffered from sore throat as I was not given any pill. During these days, I got a chance to take a bath for three times. But drinking water for me only comes from the tap.

Although the time for transfer to IDC in Kanchanaburi was drawing near, I myself could not afford to pay money to the police. Before we were sent there, some detainees wanted to go to Mae Sot. But they could not afford the transportation charges. At that time, police reduced the amount to 300 baht per person. But later on they were denied to be sent to Mae Sot. Some detainees were beaten until bloodshed on their backs for changing their prison cards with others. As a result, three refugees were moved to Cell No. 10 (A) where criminals were detained.

At noon on 12 May 1995, when approximately 100 detainees were about to get on the bus, the police asked us whether we wanted to have lunch. When we said, "Yes", they laughed at us and said, "Just joking, no food for you today". When we arrived at Kanchanaburi IDC, those detainees who changed their prison cards in Bangkok were beaten again.

Later, they delivered rice packages, but they said we were not allowed to eat until each of us had paid 100 baht for bus fare to Halockhani Deportation Point. Finally, each of us paid them 100 baht. After lunch, the police said that if we wanted to stay upstairs, we would have to pay 100 baht each. The police said that we were not allowed to stay in the room downstairs and then they switched off all the ceiling fans and running water. A few people who could afford were moved to upstairs, but most of us remained downstairs.

At 5:00 p.m., two female detainees were searched by the police for money. First, they thrust their hands into the women's chest and breast. These two women explained them again and again in tears that they had no money. Impatience rose from our hearts and we shouted at them (the police) not to do like this. They replied that if we did not want to see, we must pay for those two women. Then, the policemen came into our room and beat us again.

After that, they started searching the women again. The police thrust their hands into the women's pants and moving here and there. Sometimes they prodded their batons into the women's groins. Finally, all of us in the room collected money amongst ourselves and paid the police. After that, 20 women were moved upstairs.

But some detainees and I myself were ordered to line up, and then the police hit and kicked us one after another. We did not defend them because our situation would be getting worse if we did so. Blood oozed from the mouths of some detainees because of violent beatings by the police. At 6:00 p.m., each of us got one plate of rice. Then, the police asked whether it was enough or not. When one detainee answered it was not enough, he was taken out of the room. He came back with his face swollen and was not able to speak a word. When I arrived, there were

more than 200 detainees in a room of 60 ft x 30 ft. One plate of rice there was 5-10 baht. The prison workers took some cooked rice from quota of the detainees and made money by selling it again at the price of 5-10 baht per plate.

Men and women detainees were separated into two cells. If someone wanted to move to the women's cell, he needed to pay 100 baht. Some men moved to their wife's place after paying 100 baht. Those who wanted to stay freely and comfortably paid 100 baht to the police and moved to the women's cell.

The prison authorities persuaded the girls whom they liked to sleep with by offering more food and threat. They always persuaded the girls they desired by saying, "If you sleep with us, you will be released in Kanchanaburi and sent back to Bangkok". If the girls scolded at them, they always hit and kicked those girls with intimidation, "You will be killed; what do you think of me".

Some women who were very afraid of them and who tried to accommodate with prevailing condition were finally raped by the prison authorities. Some girls were even re-arrested at the bus terminal while they were trying to sneak back to Bangkok.

The Burmese who left Bangkok for Kanchanaburi were also arrested at the Kanchanaburi bus terminal or nearby places. They were then kept in the detention centre in Kanchanaburi. All possession of the detainees were always seized by the police as soon as they were in Kanchanaburi IDC. Whenever high-ranking officers visited the prisons, these unlisted detainees were forcibly moved to a hiding place as ordered by the police.

Any detainee who can afford to pay 8,000 baht is released in Kanchanaburi. Some employers used to come to Kanchanaburi and take their labourers out by giving a bribe to the police. Some Thai employers also came and bought the detainees for working on their vessels at sea or at their workshops. The employers buy the Burmese detainees at the price of 8,000 baht per person and cut all their salaries in the beginning months, and after the repayment period, they are promised to receive the monthly salary again. So some agreed to follow the employers for working instead of staying under uncertain future in prisons and detention cells. The number of detainees released were filled in with the new detainees arrested in Kanchanaburi on the same day by listing the same names of those released.

One day before release, we were moved into the women cell with others who had paid for transportation charges. All women detainees who cannot afford to pay were moved into the men cell. All detainees who can

not afford to pay the transportation charges were not released even if their terms are expired in accordance with the Illegal Immigrant Act of Thailand, instead their terms are extended at least two-three weeks or so.

As a girl whom the police desired was in our group to be repatriated at Halockhani Point in the following morning, she was referred to the new cell. At midnight, she was replaced by a new girl and taken out by the police. On the wall of the cell, there was a notice in Burmese, suggesting all Burmese girls and women to pretend as those who got married in order to escape from the rapes by Thai police. At that time 220 released persons had to sleep for one night in that cell. She was not seen among those released detainees when we arrived at Halockhani on 29 May 1995.

At 6:00 a.m. more than 200 people were put into two prison lorry trucks which were roofed and surrounded with no waterproof, except prison-styled iron bars, and all of us were sent back to Halockhani. We got a package of rice per person before leaving. Because of heavy rains on the way, all the people got wet and cold. All cars could not reach Halockhani and we had to stop at a point one and half hour walk from Halockhani as the road was damaged by the rains. We were ordered to get down from the trucks and walk to Halockhani after being divided into four groups of 50 detainees. After half-an-hour walk, we were ordered to sit down on the ground in front of a Thai border check point to listen their words of not try to enter Thailand again as they had planted land mines along the border and to go back inside Burma.

Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP) singled out five girls from our group to help them cook in this afternoon while they were pressing the released detainees ahead to the border point with a promise that they would be sent back after cooking. The girls refused to cook and explained BPP that they just wanted to go back to Halockhani. The other prisoners also helped these girls in explaining the BPP. Therefore, BPP allowed them to go back to Halockhani along with other released detainees. It was 3:00 p.m. when we arrived at Halockhani and the rains came to cease. We had to sit again in front of the Refugee Camp Committee in row and in groups to be recounted the numbers. Village headmen asked whether any of the released detainees was left behind by Thai police. Then the Refugee Committee in the village arranged accommodation for all of us at different homes there.

Meanwhile, Thai police arrived at this village and asked for 600 baht per person to bring the refugees back inside Thailand in a safe manner. Some persons who were able to pay the money managed to get back to Sangkhalaburi of Thailand in a police car. There are four main Thai check points on the way from Halockhani to Sangkhalaburi. If anyone who does not have a Thai identity card or travelling document want to

pass these check points, he/she need to pay 600 baht to Thai police and travelled in a police car and back within one day. Normal bus fare from Halockhani to Sangkhalaburi is 150 baht.

A friend of mine and I had an opportunity to stay at the hut of one of village leaders. After dinner, I did have a talk with him and he requested me to explain a little bit about my experiences regarding the situation in IDC and on the way back there. I explained details to him, including how Thai police targeted five girls at the check point before arriving this camp. When I asked him about the experiences of others which he had ever heard, he said they were the same, but sometimes the girls who were of good looking and whom the Thai police desired were forcibly left on Thai soil. Then all the girls remained at the Thai check point were raped by Thai police and then sent to Sangkhalaburi instead of a refugee camp in order to black out what happened to the victims."

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Later, UNHCR introduced a new policy to the refugees of ethnic nationalities from Burma that there would be no mean of assistance for them in Bangkok and they should go back to the border and receive assistance over there. Although UNHCR suggested them to go back to the border, it had not issued any recommendation letter for travelling to the border. Moreover, UNHCR fails to provide any assistance to them once they are at the border. The survival of these refugees much depends on Bangkok-based relief organisations — Burma Border Consortium and COEER — which contribute some rice, salt and fish paste. Chilli is available some time..

Thai government have been putting so many kind of pressure upon the refugees living in Bangkok and along the Thai-Burmese border to achieve good relation with the military junta in Burma, SLORC. In the late 1995, all persons of concern from Burma were asked to enter the Safe Area in Ratchaburi.

14.15. The Plight of Burmese Students in SDC

As of 21 December 1995, a total of 20 Burmese students are still behind the bars at Thai Special Detention Centre (SDC), Bangkok. Among them are Toe Kyi and Tin Maung Htoo, both of them are leaders of All Burma Basic Education Students Union (Thailand), who were arrested in Bangkok along with other eleven students by the Thai police on 3 December 1993 while they were attending a "Conference on Human Rights in Burma" organised by the Students Federation of Thailand (SFT), Action Committee for Democracy in Burma (ACDB) and Students Committee for Human Rights in Burma (SCHRB).

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All of them were sent IDC in Bangkok and were held for two months. They were informed that they were charged with illegal entry to Thailand under the Thai Immigration Act. On 4 February 1994, all of them were transferred to SDC. They were joined by the Burmese students arrested in front of the SLORC embassy in 1994 and those from the safe area arrested after the march-out from the camp on 17 January 1995.

Life in the SDC is terrible. No one was allowed to see visitors except a medical doctor from FISRAPT, an organisation affiliated with United Nations in Bangkok, who appeared once a week.

The detainees were separated into small groups and kept in tiny cells. Some of them were not allowed to physical exercise. Zaw Moe, one of the Burmese students in

SDC, died in a police hospital on 13 June 1995. He suffered from brain neurasthenia which caused him half-body-paralysed two weeks before he passed away. Medical doctor from FISRAP came and visited him on 8 June 1995 and recommended the police to send the victim to a hospital. But he was hospitalised just one day before his death when his condition was fatal.

Some students left for the third countries under the refugee resettlement programme and a number of students were transferred to Safe Area in 1995. All of them revealed their terrible stories during their time in SDC. Among them, Maung Maung Oo is now suffering from some mental problems in Safe Area. The fate of the remaining students remains unknown.

List of the first group released from SDC on 29 June 1995 is as follow.

No.	Name	NI No.	Entry to SDC	ALLEGED OFFENCE
1	Tun Tun Oo			
2	Saw Myint Aye			
3	Ba Hein Kyaw			
4	Aung Naing Tun			
5	Hla Soe			
6	Aung Myint Than			

List of the second group released from SDC on 21 July 1995 is as follow.

No.	Name	NI No	Entry to SDC	ALLEGED OFFENCE
1	Latt Ko Ko	1236	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
2	Hein Htat	3377	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
3	Maung Maung Pyone	3520	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
4	Yaung Ni Oo	3781	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
5	Han Zaw		19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
6	Myint Wai	5853	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
7	Maung Maung Tun	6081	19.02.1995	staged protest in SA

List of the third group transferred from SDC to Safe Area on 18 October 1995 is as follow.

No.	Name	NI No.	Entry to SDC	ALLEGED OFFENCE
1	Zaw Lat	1370	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
2	Zaw Wanna	1372	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
3	Zaw Min	1608	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
4	Hla Kyi	2614	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
5	Zaw Lay	2966	19.02.1995	staged protest in SA
6	Kon Balai	#		
7	Charly	#		
8	Maung Maung Oo	#		

9	San Lwin	3903	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
10	Win Tun Lin	5340	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA

List of the fourth or group transferred from SDC to Safe Area on 24 November 1995 is as follow.

No	Name	NI No.	Entry to SDC	ALLEGED OFFENCE
1	Tun Lin	1181	19.02.1995	staged protest in SA
2	Yan Naing	1574	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
3	Kyaw Thu	1593	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
4	Paing Htoo	1828	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
5	Kyaw Zay Ya	1873	19.02.1995	staged protest in SA
6	Toe Toe	1883	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
7	Soe Oo	3309	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
8	Tin Htut	3799	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
9	San Tun Aung	5070	19.02.1995	staged protest in SA
10	Htun Htun Oo	5689	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA

Following persons left for Australia directly from SDC for the resettlement.

1. Khin Maung Aye
2. Phone Myint
3. Aung Kyaw Moe
4. Soe Soe Oo
5. Tin Htay
6. Ms. Mi Mi
7. Par Pa (a) Nyi Nyi Soe
8. Maung Maung Than

List of the detainees remained in SDC before a 21 December 1995 release of ten students.

No.	NAME	NI No.	Entry to SDC	ALLEGED OFFENCE
1	Han Thein	1149	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
2	Myint Lwin Oo	1185	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
3	Win Naing Tun	1187	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
4	Nanda Kyaw	1319	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
5	Ye Hein	1340	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
6	Pho Shwe Hla	1359	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
7	Thet Oo Naing	1360	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
8	Aung Tun	1397	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
9	Naing Tun	1587	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
10	Win Htut	1852	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
11	Aung Myint Kyi	1864	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA

12	Win Myint	2093	27.01.1994	violation of SA rules
13	Tin Kyaing	2000	19.02.1995	staged protest in SA
14	Tint Zaw Oo (a) Toe Kyi	2500	03.12.1993	staged protest in BE
15	Ye Moe	2702	17.12.1993	violation of SA rules
16	Nyi Nyi Lwin	3218	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
17	Kyaw Soe	3276	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
18	Min Khin Kyaw	3360	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
19	Myo Aung	3659	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
20	Min Naing Aung	4103	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
21	San Oo	4274	09.02.1995	violation of SA rules
22	Tin Maung Htoo	4311	03.12.1993	staged protest in SA
23	Kyi Win	5209	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
24	Than Naing	5725	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
25	Aung Zaw	5850	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
26	Tint Lwin Oo	6204	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
27	Thant Zin Htun	6929	19.01.1995	staged protest in SA
28	Myint Soe	7295	03.12.1993	staged protest in SA
29	Aung Kyaw Moe	7296	03.12.1993	staged protest in SA

Myint Ko Ko (5688) has been hospitalised in emergency from SDC for full-blown AIDS on 22 November 1995.

They all seem to be faint and particularly they have been suffering from scabies, eye & ear problems and mental illness. Possibility of HIV infection is also a serious problem.

* BE = Burmese Embassy

* SA = Safe Area

NOTES: Tint Zaw Oo (2500), Tin Maung Htoo (4311), Myint Soe (7295) and Aung Kyaw Moe (7296, who have been detained there since December 1993), have been charged with illegal entry and for staging protest in front of the SLORC Embassy in Bangkok and got sentenced only 40 days imprisonment or 2,600 baht fine since 12 January 1994. But their release has not yet come out up to now. Among them, Myint Soe and Aung Kyaw Moe haven't recognised status of person of concern by UNHCR but they appealed to UNHCR for recognition.

Ye Moe (2702) has been put in SDC, without having any court processing for violation of Safe Area's rules since 17 December 1993 and Win Myint (2093) has been in SDC for the same case since 27 June 1994. All students staged protest in Safe Area were detained in SDC such a long time without having any court processing. How long they need to serve there for such violation of Safe Area's rules and what are the sentences in terms of implementing those rules?

A group of ten were released from the SDC on 21 December 1995, but the release orders for Tint Zaw Oo (Toe Kyi), Tin Maung Htoo, Myint Soe and Aung Kyaw

Moe did not come out yet. A total of 20 Burmese students, including Myint Ko Ko, are still remained in SDC.

14.16. Chronological Report of Safe Area

Empowered by section 17 of the Ministry of Interior 1979 Immigration Act, the then Annand Panyanachun Administration made a Cabinet decision on 24 September 1991 to establish "a Burmese Students Centre".

The Burmese students initially refused to enter the Area in fear of forced repatriation to Burma as the Tak Repatriation Centre, which opened on 19 December 1988 and deported over three hundred Burmese dissidents to Rangoon, some of them against their will. Many subsequently disappeared and were reportedly tortured to death following arrests by SLORC authorities after being deported. But the Burmese students were forced to enter the Safe Area against their will based on the following facts:

1. The monthly allowance of 2,500 baht to the Burmese students were cut off by UNHCR.
2. Thai Interior Ministry announced through the media, stating that any Thai citizen who shelter the Burmese students would be fined 50,000 baht and six months imprisonment.
3. The students would be detained at SDC and IDC without time limit if they were not willing to enter the Safe Area.
4. The authorities of IDC psychologically and physically harassed the students to enter Safe Area.
5. Regarding resettlement or scholarship programmes, it is compulsory for Burmese students to enter the Safe Area to get exit permit.

14.16.1. Incidents Taken Place

In late June 1993, while Ko Peter Win Pe and some friends were sitting at shop in front of camp gate, Ko Peter Win Pe was beaten by a villager with an iron bar, losing consciousness and was hospitalised with eight stitches. In September 1993, window mirror of UNHCR office's in Safe Area was broken. On 16 September 1993, some papers from UNHCR office there were set on fire and someone wrote a death threat to Khun Villaiwan, UNHCR's representative for Safe Area, on the office notice board.

As a result, UNHCR office there was closed and its allowance for the Burmese students in Safe Area were cut off for two months. A suspect student Bo Tar was not only arrested and detained three months in jail without any charge or trial but also he was revoked from Safe Area. He was later released, the official finding was that the fire had probably been started from an electric shock. Meanwhile, the Thai

authorities imposed a curfew and deployed security forces around Safe Area.

On 6 October 1993, while a Burmese student, Maung Toe Toe, was watching TV at recreation centre, he was beaten by a drunk security man with butt of his assault rifle. When the victim reported to the commander the offending security man was not prosecuted, instead the curfew order was extended up to 2:00 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. On 12 October 1993, Thai registration officer (Pi Mu) and some security men lunged the barrel of their guns into stomach of Min Khin Kyaw who was watching TV at the recreation centre and Myint Aung was beaten twice — on the thigh and on the shoulders by Thai security guards with the butt of their guns. Meanwhile, Maung Oo who came out to see what was happening because of the noise was also beaten without questioning by the security guards. Not only the registration officer (Pi Mu) did not compromise but shouted “Ying Ying” (Shoot Shoot!!!) at the security guards as he wanted the students back to their beds.

On 15 October 1993, while Soe Min and Bader were walking on the main road of the village, they were beaten by two villagers with bottles. Soe Min was hospitalised with seven stitches. Bader was forcibly pressured to return to Burma. Now he is in a SLORC's prison. In late October 1993, while Ye Moe was attending an invited wedding ceremony held in front of the camp, he got an injury of four stitches on the head after beaten by some villagers. On 24 January 1994, Kyi Win was called over in a friendly manner and was slapped across his face without any apparent reason by one of the Thai security men by the order of the camp's officer (Pi Mu). Therefore, all Burmese students in Safe Area staged a protest by not participating in the inauguration ceremony of COERR school and demanded the transfer of registration officer (Pi Mu). On 13 April 1994, the Burmese students, who were celebrating the traditional water festival, were disturbed by some intoxicated youths from the village with a threat, “You just stop your water festival, if you don't stop, we will come and make you stop.” So the Burmese students had to stop it.

On 16 April 1994, while Zaw Latt and Tun Tun Kyaw were returning to the camp after releasing fish at a monastery, two villagers on a motorbike approached and beat them. Then the two students complained to the camp's official and Pak Thor police station. The police officer told them that fine for this offence is only 200 bath and when the two accused were released, the victims would be in danger.

On 2 June 1994, a Burmese female student, Lay Lay Nwe received a sexual assault by a security man (whose nick name is Udom) who asked, “Can we sleep together?” (Non deuakan dai mai?). Aung Kyaw complained to the camp's officer about that case. They replied that was only a joke without any action by a security man. Moreover, the camp's officer said, “You just complain for joking case. So you have no chance to go outside for shopping and religious ceremonies at church by car driven by a security man.” There is only one driver for the Burmese students' ferry to go outside. So it was stopped.

At night on that day, around 8:00 p.m., while Pai Htoo was going for shopping

outside the camp, he was beaten by a villager with a broken bottle. He was wounded and taken to a hospital to be treated with two stitches on forehead, four stitches on eyebrows and another twelve stitches on nose.

On 3 June 1994, Tun Lwin, who was a volunteer English teacher at Maneeloi village school, was accused on charges of molestation. Then, some Burmese student leaders met with the deputy governor of Ratchaburi Province, educational authorities and immigration officers who agreed to discuss about the case. Tun Lwin was not found guilty. The Burmese student leaders requested the Thai authorities to explain about misunderstandings among the villagers.

But at that night, while Win Naing Bo and Nyi Nyi Lwin were returning to the camp after shopping, they were hacked with small axe by the two villagers. Win Naing Bo got seriously injuries on the left hand that required 16 stitches, but luckily escaped from being murdered. No sooner then, Aung Kyw was hit on the protuberance of the occiput with a large farming knife. He required four stitches. Luckily, as he was wearing a hat, it helped him to get only a soften blow. On account of brutal torture, their friend, Nyi Nyi Lwin drank some petrol in an alleged attempt to commit suicide and had to be hospitalised. Later Tun Lwin was sentenced for two years in jail without any appeal.

On 16 January 1995, around 11:00 p.m., while five Burmese students — Phone Myint, Win Htut, Min Khin Kyaw, Thet Oo Naing and Myo Aye — were watching TV at the recreation centre and while the latter two were warming up, five over-drunk Thai security guards came and kicked the fire as well as Myo Aye's body with jungle boots. While Min Khin Kyaw was compromising, he was punched by a security guard. Then, the camp's driver, Phi Sant caught Min Khin Kyaw's body from behind and four other guards beat him with belt buckles. As Min Khin Kyaw was brutally tortured, Phone Myint and Min Khin Kyaw repeated to the camp's acting commander (Pi Mu) to solve the problems. Min Khin Kyaw was beaten by fifteen security guards with torches and batons, but the acting commander did not try to stop brutal torture in front of MOI office. In the meantime, The already drunk acting commander and a female staff had left the camp by car without solving the problem in Safe Area.

Then some police from Pak Thor police station arrived at Safe Area. After that, the injured student, Min Khin Kyaw was sent to Pak Thor hospital by a Thai police accompanied by two Burmese students — Mi Mi (female) and Phone Myint. The Burmese students requested the police officer to solve the problem of brutal torture, but they received no response from the police. Then, some security guards catapulted the roof of dormitory 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D, where a number of Burmese students were gathering. When the injured student and his companions returned to the safe camp, the police left the camp compound and took position on the main road in front of the camp. Since the threat to their security had intensified, Burmese students in the Safe Area held a meeting and decided to leave for UNHCR office in Bangkok as the incident proved that Safe Area was no longer safe as guaranteed by the Thai government.

At 11:00 a.m. on 17 January 1995, all the Burmese students including children, women and those in pregnancy, left the Safe Area peacefully. They were holding posters that read, "We should not disturb any other people, we are peacefully going on our way". The Burmese students leaving the camp on foot were blocked by 150 police forces, soldiers and firemen who were armed with batons and firearms. The students were blocked three times. The final block was when the Burmese students arrived in front of the Wat Sa Wang monastery where they were surrounded by the Thai security forces.

Then, the Burmese students discussed the problem with the responsible persons of Ratchaburi Province and asked the deputy governor to allow them meeting with the officials from Ministry of Interior, who can solve the problem and can decide. Also, the students explained to the deputy governor that it was impossible for them to return to the Safe Area since it was not safe for the Burmese students as the last incident proved that it was not secure there. When one of the police officers said that the MOI officers should arrive within one hour, the Burmese students were waiting quietly there. Then, in a few minutes, the UNHCR officer, Mr. Sonsit arrived, but he could not solve and decide the problem. At that time, some Thai villagers brought some food for Burmese students. But Thai police did not allow those food to reach to the Burmese students. Burmese students were threatened by Thai police who said that Thai villagers did not agree with the Burmese students.

Finally, about 20 women and children were forcibly sent back to the Safe Area while others were detained at Pak Thor police station and town hall. On 18 January 1995, some of Burmese students were forcibly loaded on a pick-up by the Thai police and brought back to the Safe Area. Once in the Safe Area, the Burmese students were kept under house-arrest-like situation and they were not allowed to make any telephone call or to go outside. Moreover, they were surrounded by the Thai police. At noon on 19 January 1995, 55 Burmese students from the Safe Area were transferred to SDC while 13 others were charged with illegal entry into Thailand and detained at Ratchaburi Police Station.

14.17. Cheap Labourer or Illegal Workers

There are thousands and thousands of illegal Burmese working in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore because of deteriorating economy inside Burma. Some of them using Thailand as a stepping stone and try to go and work in Malaysia and Singapore while a number of Burmese have been sneaking into the latter two countries by sea directly from southern Burma. Among them, Thailand has housed majority of these refugees-turn-workers who unwillingly have to be in Thailand without any paper or document. The number of illegal Burmese working in Thailand dramatically increased after 1990 as a result of gross human rights violations and economic hardships in Burma which forced many Burmese to leave the country. Political turmoil and grave human rights violations against the rural inhabitants led the massive influx of refugees and migrant workers into Thailand. The root cause of unmerciful

poverty in Burma is corvée labour, forced portering, forced taxation and forced relocation which uproot most of, if not all, their home community. The only way to escape from such brute burdens for them, especially able-bodied young men and women, is to leave for Thailand where they think that they can survive from the circle of oppression one way or the other round.

At this point, a serious shortage of unskilled labour in Thailand has paved the way for the refugees (according to the international standards) or illegal immigrants (as defined by the Thai government) to seek job opportunity rather than to remain in the refugee camps where they have little or no guarantee for their survival. Although they are aware of how risky for them to be working illegally in the cities without any paper or document, they have no alternatives because their consideration is that whether in the refugee camps or in the cities, recognition to them as persons of concern from UNHCR office in Bangkok still remains out of question.

Approximately 300,000 Burmese nationals from all ethnic backgrounds have been working in Thailand. Those who want to work are usually trafficked into Thailand's cities or work site as promised via a safe passage arranged by the traffickers who deal with some Thai police at every check-point before hand. They are usually trafficked by vans or trucks which are fully covered with tarpaulin sheets, tightly tie with ropes. In one case, about seventy Burmese men, women and children trafficked in one ten-wheeled truck were caught in a fire on the truck and more than fifty were injured.

Once they are in Thailand, they have no say regarding the work or pay or working condition because the bottom line for them is to get a job, whatever it is. As a consequence, many are working for much lower than the minimum wage and in deplorable working condition. Illegal workers are most common in ten border provinces — Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Mae Hong Son, Tak, Kanchanaburi, Ratchaburi, Chumphon, Petchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan and Ranong — where they work mostly as unskilled labourers at construction site, fishery, rubber plantation and farming. Other workplaces for the Burmese girls range from restaurants, construction sites, factories, sweatshop, and brothels.

Most Burmese illegal immigrants, who are sold at the work-site for approximately 8,000-10,000 baht per person, after being trafficked into Thailand, have to work without any pay for three or four months in the work-site like debt-bondage. Repercussion of their vulnerability and willingness to work for whatever they can get is "cheap pay". Their employers are known to pay 50-60 baht a day to each Burmese workers, compared with an official minimum wage for Thais of 145 baht. Illegal workers from Burma share apartments, living together ten or twenty people in one apartment to cover the expenses — rental charges, electricity and water.

Moreover, in Thailand, their status itself is vulnerable to the abuses and exploitation by the police and their employers. From their lower pay is deducted a sum of money for an extra protection fee in order to bribe the local police. The Thai

employers pay the bribe which is collected from the Burmese illegal workers to some police to make sure they turn a blind eye. Once the police are aware that they are illegal, they are always hounded or their places raided by the police. They can be released if they can bribe as demand by the police before reaching the station.

To avoid from paying wages, even though which is less than half of the minimum, sometimes the employers deliberately inform the police to arrest his workers on pay day. In case of special operations launched by the police, victimised workers are directly sent to IDC soon after being arrested. Normally they are sent to the police station where they have to wait for trial at a court where the victims were charged with illegal entry to Thailand and received a regular sentence of two months or equivalent fines. Those who can afford to pay are sent to IDC in Bangkok and detained for two weeks in minimum. Once at the entrance of their cells, all their possessions are normally seized by the Thai police. The expired date of their sentence, if not being renewed, and expectations for being released can come true one day, but the return of their possessions is beyond their hope.

Prostitutes from Burma also suffered the same condition because illegal workers are penalised while their employers and the pimps go free. While detained, they faced appalling overcrowding, sexual harassment and inadequate food rations.

Their release and chances to work depends on the willingness and demands of their employers or saviours who wished to buy them at the bottom price as well as depends on how cheap the victims themselves are able to offer.

As in Thailand, illegal Burmese workers in Malaysia are hunted by the police. In Malaysia, the police deported these illegal workers directly to Burma via the airport. Some escaped deportation by bribing but many Malay police did not accept bribe.

Circle of working and subject to arrest forms their way of life. Even though their life in Thailand or Malaysia or Singapore is getting worse, they dare not return to Burma where the question of survival and right to live is unequal. Where there is no right to life, there is no way to survive and, victims are forced to leave in such a situation. Only very few per cent of Burmese are coming to those countries merely for better job opportunity and money.

14.18. List of Incidents

14.18.1. On 19 April 1995, approximately 200 troops of SLORC and DKBA from Mae Ta Waw garrison troops crossed into the village of Meh Wah Kwee in Thailand, burned down 30 houses where Karen refugees were staying and abducted about 10 families to Burma. [Source: KHRG]

14.18.2. On 23 April 1995, approximately 300 SLORC and DKBA troops, largely SLORC, crossed Moei River at Kler Thay Lu (20 km south of Manerplaw) and

attacked Mae Law village and burned down refugee homes there. On the same day, another large SLORC/DKBA forces crossed Moei River and attacked Karen refugees in Mae Wih Kee, 10 km south of Manerplaw, set up roadblocks along a dirt road and threatened Thai security forces in the area. [Source: KHRG]

14.18.3. On 24 April, these forces (approximately 300 SLORC and DKBA troops) again attacked Mae Wih Kee and took a large number of refugees back to Burma across the border at gun point. [Source: KHRG]

14.18.4. On 25 April 1995, 40-60 SLORC/DKBA troops hit Mae Ra Ma Luang, which had not been attacked before, and Kamaw Lay Ko camps. On 28 April, SLORC/DKBA troops attacked and burned Baw Noh camp. These attacks were completely different from those preceding them: they attacked brazenly with 50 to 100 heavily armed troops, in broad daylight in all, except Kamaw Lay Ko, and they showed no hesitation to attack Thai forces even without being provoked. At Baw Noh, they even had supporting fire from SLORC's 81 mm mortar from the Burmese side of the border. Furthermore, the attacks aimed to destroy the camps as a whole by burning them down. One hundred and seventy houses were burned in Mae Ra Ma Luang, 300 in Kamaw Lay Ko and over 700 in Baw Noh. Over 6,000 refugees were left homeless and destitute as the monsoon season was about to begin. [Source: KHRG]

14.18.5. In August 1995, a SLORC-appointed chairman of village LORC from Yin Gyi village in Longlon Township, Tenasserim Division, fled to the Thai-Burmese border area with the reason that he could not continue to collect money from the villagers monthly to present the Township LORC chairman and IB 104. [Source: KNU]

14.18.6. On 26 November 1995, the driver of a tour van was killed instantly and 10 tourists injured when the DKBA fired with small arms and grenades. The party was ambushed at Tha Song Yang District along the 150 km scenic road paralleled the Moei River in Tak province, Thailand. [Source: ABSDF]

14.18.7. At night on 2 December 1995, about 60 armed men from DKBA attacked Sho Klo refugee camp where approximately 10,000 people were sheltering. The perpetrators robbed the refugees, taking an estimated 10,000 baht and seized three KNU officials. The raiders also threatened to burn down the camp before they fled. The camp has been in existence for 10 years. [Source: ABSDF]

14.18.8. At 1:00 p.m. on 26 December 1995, about 30 armed men from DKBA led by Chit Nu crossed into Thailand and committed a robbery at Section 7 of Sho Klo refugee camp. Because of shootings, Saw Aye Tun, in charge of Section 7, and his two-year-old daughter was wounded. Some houses were destroyed and all the valuable belongings which worth more than 510,000 baht were taken away. Other perpetrators were Hla Win, Kyi Win, Maung Win, Pattamya, Soe Oo, Shwe Kyaw Myaing, Pha Naw Pa Leh, La Kaba, Paw Lo and Maung Aye Myint. [Source: KNU]

14.18.9. At night on 27 December 1995, a group of armed men from DKBA attacked U Thu Kloh, killing an eight-year-old girl and wounded an elderly woman. Both victims were Thai Karens. The armed men not only committed a robbery but also destroyed the properties of the villagers. At 10:30 p.m. of the same night, that armed group reached at old Ka Ye Htar village and opened fire on the villagers, causing three Thai Karens wounded. [*Source: KNU*]

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People living near Wankha (Kawmoora) are collecting the shells fired by SLORC into the Kawmooram stronghold in February 1995 to make money. Some shells landed into Thailand.